

According to the old timers, this has been the wettest September in a long time. With 45" of rain in the last 27 days, the rivers are high and the fishing is difficult. The relentless wind and rain have discouraged many anglers, but a dedicated few are still getting out. While most of the local coho salmon runs have peaked, expect pods of ocean-bright fish to continue to enter local streams and rivers this upcoming week. Here is the report:

Two visiting anglers reported slow fishing at Fleming Lagoon (near the burn pile off the Orca Road). A few coho salmon are present in the lagoon, but the return seems to be smaller than average this year. Depending on the day, you may find good fishing in the saltwater adjacent to the culvert at around high tide.

Glacial runoff is flooding into Ibeck Creek and the water at the highway bridge resembles a milkshake. Coho salmon are still running upstream and anglers will find them holding in clear, calm pockets along the stream's west bank.

Ibeck Creek's smaller western channel is running relatively clear and has been producing some bright coho salmon. Dennis K. from Roseburg, OR caught a beautiful hen there yesterday (pictured). While Dennis and his friends were reporting slower-than-usual fishing, they did not come to Cordova to sit in the lodge all day!

Farther out the Copper River Highway, anglers were reporting some success in the backwater near mile marker 11. Salmon are holding where the clear water hits the glacial water. Try a Vibrax spinner or a heavy black rabbit hair leech first thing in the morning.

In the Alaganik River system, look for salmon in the tributaries. You will find fish in calm backwaters and beaver ponds adjacent to the highway. While many of these salmon will still be bright, an increasing percentage will be darkening into their spawning colors. As a silver salmon blushes, the color and the texture of its meat changes as well. "Dark" fish should be gently released so they can spawn a future generation of bright salmon. Using artificial lures and single barbless hooks facilitates a quick release. A fish that is



Dennis K. with a beautiful coho salmon hen 9/26/12



Dolly Varden

bleeding from the gills will probably not survive, so please retain it as part of your legal limit.

More and more Dolly Varden are entering local waterways. These beautiful char (cousins of trout and salmon) put up a good tussle on light fly tackle. Just like salmon, Dolly Varden are “anadromous” and can go to saltwater to feed, but must return to freshwater to spawn. Unlike

salmon, Dollies feed aggressively in freshwater and they can return to spawn multiple times. Treat Dolly Varden with respect and gently release them if you are not going to eat them.

According to the National Weather Service, the weather should finally improve by early next week. What better way to celebrate than to go fishing? Good luck out there!

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